

## PART VII

## Farm Marketing and Level of Living

Location and Transportation for Marketing

In terms of major agricultural commodities, Garfield County is suitably located for marketing in the western states region and transcontinentally to the eastern United States. Major farm products are wheat and barley which can be shipped long distances. Green peas, another major commodity, is processed in a cannery at Dayton and from there distributed nationally. In terms of perishable products such as fruit, livestock and milk, it is at a slight disadvantage in competition with areas nearer major urban centers and terminal markets. The farming region centered at Pomeroy is somewhat distant by highway and rail from major Pacific Northwest cities and terminals and this distance is reflected in higher freight rates and hauling costs than those paid by producers and shippers in other competitive areas. Garfield County is a surplus food area that must distribute agricultural products to distant markets either before or after they are processed. Perishable vegetable production is through major canneries at Dayton, Waitsburg and Walla Walla. Fruit, grain and some cattle, however, must be shipped longer distances to major markets at Spokane or on the Pacific Coast. Pomeroy is over 300 miles from Seattle and Portland by highway and railroad and over 115 miles from Spokane by highway.

Railroad and trucking facilities for moving bulk shipments of grains, processing fruit and vegetables, livestock and dairy products are modern. A branch line of Union Pacific Railway terminating at Pomeroy connects with transcontinental lines passing through Spokane and Pasco. Another Union Pacific Line follows the Snake River through Clarkston giving rail service to farmlands of northern Garfield County. Rail lines are important for transporting wheat and barley from granaries within the county to terminal granaries and flour mills in the Pacific Northwest. Several interstate franchised motor truck carriers are available for hauling farm products.

Garfield County is traversed by two modern interstate highways--U.S. 410 and 195 connecting with Seattle and Portland. Shipping of agricultural products has become highly dependent on licensed and contractor-owned trucks using recently improved highways. Most truck traffic out of Garfield County terminates at Walla Walla and Spokane but some goes to Pacific Coast and midwestern cities. Commercial farms have good accessibility for trucks. Washington State Highway Research Council reports show that Garfield County has 452 miles of surfaced, improved and graded public roads suitable for agricultural trucking.

Income: Value of Products Sold

Census of agricultural data on the value of farm products sold show that the trend of farm income has been upward in recent years. Garfield County farms marketed agricultural products worth \$8,679,700 in 1954, compared with \$5,369,800 in 1949. Garfield County ranks high in the state in per-farm average gross income because of the size of its farms and the specialization grain crops or livestock.

Total Value of Farm Products Sold in 1954: \$8,679,700

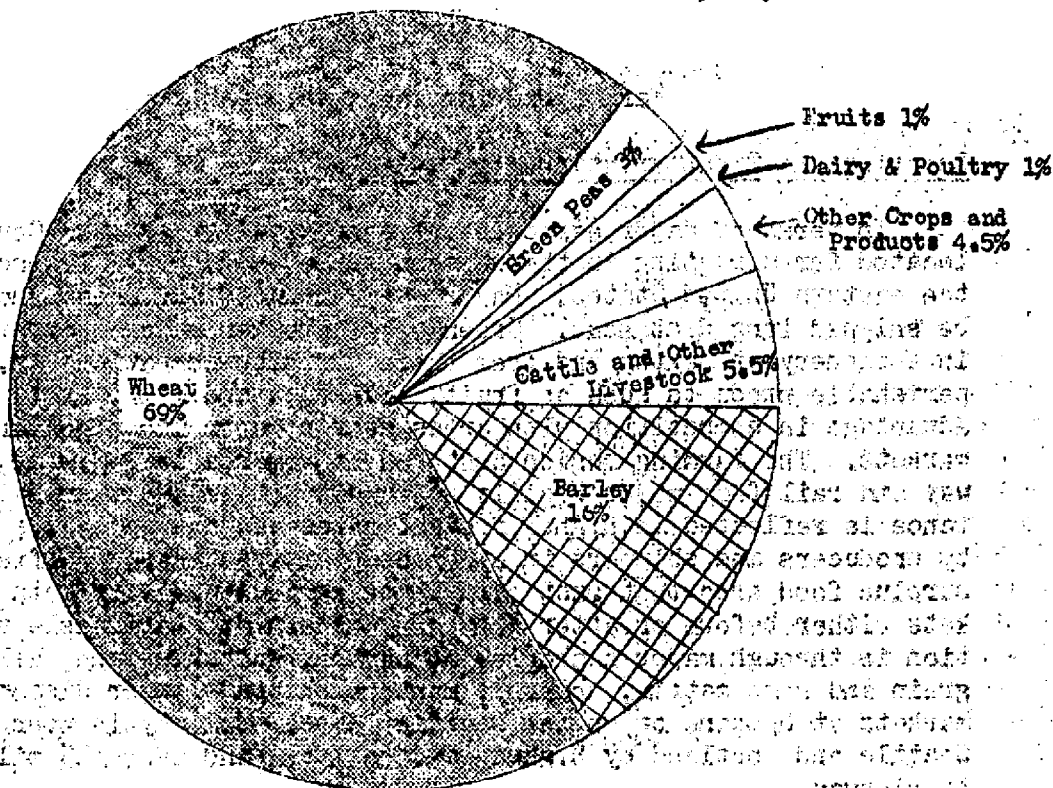


Figure 13. Sources of Cash Income, Garfield County, 1954

Sales of farm products and farm incomes vary by type and size of farms. Over 95 percent of the county's 276 farms are commercial--selling products valued at over \$250 per year. A majority of Garfield County's commercial farms are above average or high income units. In 1954 about 42 percent of all commercial farms in the county were in economic Class I, with sales of over \$25,000 for the year. Thirty-five percent of the commercial farms made sales in excess of \$10,000. Over four-fifths of all farms in the county exceeded the \$5,000 level of farm sales receipts for the census year of 1954. Large-scale growing of wheat and barley and peas contribute to the general pattern of high income farm operations.

#### Marketing Field Crops: Wheat, Barley, Oats, Alfalfa

About 87 percent of all farm marketings in Garfield County are field crops with wheat the predominant commercial crop. Wheat sales generally accounted for about 70 percent of all marketing returns to farmers. Barley is the second most important cash crop. In 1954 about 1,100,000 bushels of barley were sold off farms returning them approximately \$1,400,000. Wheat sales were 2,950,000 bushels, valued at \$5,900,000. Minor cash field crops were alfalfa, oats, potatoes and field corn. Each of these crops were mainly sold locally returning \$13,000 for oats, \$11,500 for alfalfa hay and lesser sums for other crops.

Facilities for wheat and barley storage, shipping and hauling are well-developed in this highly specialized grain growing region and in adjacent counties. There are 13 state licensed public grain warehouses within the

county with a total capacity of 2,900,000 bushels. Pomeroy is the grain storage and shipping center, having a number of granaries and a total storage capacity of 2,400,000 bushels.

Table 27.- Crops Marketed From Garfield County Farms, 1954

Type of Crops Sold	Amount Received By Farmers. (Dollars)	Percent All Crops Sold
Field Crops (wheat, barley, oats, field corn, dry peas, hay, grass seed, potatoes, etc.)	\$7,698,024	96.4
Vegetables (green peas, tomatoes, sweet corn, etc.)	257,779	3.2
Fruits, Nuts and Berries (peaches, apricots, apples)	22,740	.3
Horticultural Specialties (flower and vegetable seeds, plants)	8,000	.1
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$7,986,543	100.0

Source: U. S. Census, Agriculture

#### Marketing Commercial Vegetables - Green Peas, Tomatoes

Since the early 1930's growers in Garfield County have marketed an increasing volume of green peas for processing. In 1954 and recent years over 4,000 tons of processing peas have been handled through canneries in the Dayton, Waitsburg and Walla Walla areas. In 1954 processing green peas marketed from Garfield County were valued at about \$250,000. Tomatoes and sweet corn are other minor commercial vegetables sold on local fresh markets.

#### Marketing Fruit

Operators of several commercial orchards along the Snake River market fruit locally and to points within and adjacent to the county. In 1954 fruit marketings from the Wawawai, Almota and Central Ferry districts amounted to nearly \$23,000 according to the Census of Agriculture. Peaches and apricots were the leading fruits sold. Truck shipments of fruit are sold or delivered to assembly points in Pullman, Pomeroy and Lewiston for regional distribution. Sales are also made direct to consumers at orchards in the Snake River bottom-land.

#### Marketing Cattle, Hogs, Sheep and Wool

Sales of live animals for feeders and for slaughter totaled over \$570,000 in 1954 and made up about 5 percent of the county's farm economy. Beef calves sold as feeders to feed yards in the Columbia Basin, Walla Walla region and Yakima Valley are the major type of livestock sold, bringing more than \$300,000 per year. Beef cattle sold to feed yards and slaughter houses in southeastern Washington are second, amounting to over \$215,000 per year. Over 200 farms kept cattle as a sideline in 1954. Live hogs finished on local

barley and other feeds are third in annual market value. In 1954 about 1,600 head were sold from 75 farms with a total return of \$52,000. Sales of live sheep, lambs, wool and horses were minor in 1954, amounting to only \$3,000. In recent years more livestock producers have hauled livestock to community and private auction yards in the Walla, Clarkston and Lewiston areas. Some livestock are sold direct off farms to country buyers and agents of meat packing houses and feeding yards.

Table 28.- Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed  
Garfield County, 1954

Class of Livestock Products Sold	Quantity Marketed	Amount Received by Farmers
<u>Dairy Products</u>		
Whole milk-----	848,015 lbs.	\$ 38,893
Butterfat-----	39,845 lbs	20,389
Total all dairy products		\$ 59,282
<u>Poultry and poultry products</u>		
Chickens-----	4,353 birds	\$ 4,606
Eggs-----	42,247 dozen	17,899
Turkeys, ducks, geese-----		180
Total all poultry & poultry products		\$ 22,685
<u>Animals sold alive</u>		
Cattle-----	2,006 head	\$216,279
Calves-----	4,391 head	301,610
Hogs and pigs-----	1,588 head	51,944
Sheep and lambs-----	81 head	1,389
Horses and mules-----	21 head	965
Total all animals sold alive		\$572,187
<u>Other livestock and livestock products sold</u>		\$ 927
Total amount received for livestock and livestock products-----		\$655,081

Source: U. S. Census, Agriculture

#### Marketing Dairy Products

Marketing dairy products such as whole milk and cream has declined in volume in recent years. In 1954 there were only 12 producers selling whole milk and about 80 were selling cream. Value of whole milk sold as grade A for fluid consumption was about \$40,000. Cream sales to a local creamery and other local users was valued at \$20,000. Market outlets for whole milk were to distributors in Pomeroy, Dayton and Walla Walla serving the southeastern Washington region.

#### Marketing Poultry, Eggs

Poultry marketing--a small commercial sideline--consists mainly of sales of eggs and chickens to handlers and processors in Walla Walla, Dayton and Clarkston. About 90 farms sold eggs locally and to the Washington Cooperative

Farmers plant at Walla Walla. Egg sales by farms, decreasing in recent years, amounted to \$18,000 in 1954. Live chickens were sold off 75 farms in 1954 for returns totaling \$4,600. Garfield County poultry production is not sufficient to meet local consumption and broilers, chickens and fresh eggs are shipped into the area from poultry raising regions of other counties. Turkey raising for market was localized to three farms in 1954.

#### Specified Farm Expenditures

Garfield County farmers who reported expenditures in 1954 spent over \$1,675,800 during the year for labor, gasoline, petroleum, fertilizers and other supplies used in crop and livestock production. Chief farming expense was for labor. Nearly 240 farms hired labor. Costs and wage payments for agricultural labor amounted to \$717,490 or an average of over \$3,000 per farm reporting. Purchases of gasoline and petroleum for use in tractors, trucks and combines, used mainly in cash-grain farming, were the second major cost. Motor fuels and lubricants cost over \$316,000, averaging \$1,225 per farm. A third major cost was for commercial fertilizer used mainly in wheat, barley and green pea production. Over 200 farms averaged about \$1,500 each for fertilizers and expended a total of \$301,530 for this item. Compared with 1949, costs for essential farm labor and supplies enumerated by the Census were much greater in 1954. Servicing and supplying Garfield County's 276 farms is an important basis of employment and local business in Pomeroy as well as in the adjacent cities of Walla Walla, Dayton and Clarkston.

Table 29.- Specified Farm Expenditures in 1954, Garfield County

Type of Expenditure	Farms Reporting	Expenditure of all Farms	Average Per Farm
Machine hire.....	149	\$ 143,110	\$ 960.47
Hired labor.....	237	717,489	3,027.37
Feed for livestock and poultry	238	197,619	830.33
Gasoline, petroleum fuel & oil	258	316,126	1,225.29
Commercial fertilizer.....	202	301,530	1,492.72
Lime and liming materials.....	--	--	--
Total production costs.....		\$1,675,874	

Source: U. S. Census, Agriculture

#### Agricultural Income Compared to Other Income

Agricultural income in Garfield County leads by far all other sources of income. In terms of income the economy of Garfield County is more heavily based on agriculture than any other Washington county. Income from sales of farm products and agricultural employment makes up nearly 68 percent of the total income of the county. In contrast to other Washington counties, alternative types of income and wages from nonfarm industries such as manufacturing, government work, commercial and service trades are relatively minor. Even the nonfarm industries are nearly all directly and indirectly based on the agricultural production and marketing which creates the predominant purchasing power and public revenues of the area. Studies by Washington State College in the early 1950's showed that Garfield's economy was continuing a trend of specialization in agriculture with some gain in agricultural income. There

was only a slight trend toward a more diversified economy with more employment in nonfarm trades and professions.

Table 30.- Types and Sources of Income 1950-1952, Garfield County 1/

Type and Source of Income	Income in Dollars by Years			Percentage of County Income by Years		
	1950	1951	1952	1950	1951	1952
Agriculture	\$4,860,000	\$3,668,000	\$5,297,000	67.5	60.5	67.9
Construction	82,000	*	*	1.1	*	*
Government	349,000	392,000	434,000	4.9	6.5	5.6
Manufacturing	240,000	239,000	257,000	3.3	3.9	3.3
Service	188,000	183,000	186,000	2.6	3.0	2.4
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	114,000	126,000	126,000	1.6	2.1	1.6
Trade	634,000	777,000	701,000	8.8	12.8	9.0
Miscellaneous	65,000	94,000	129,000	.9	1.6	1.6
Property Income	324,000	342,000	425,000	4.5	5.6	5.4
Other Income	344,000	245,000	250,000	4.8	4.0	3.2
Total	\$7,200,000	\$6,066,000	\$7,805,000	100.0	100.0	100.0

1/ John A. Guthrie and Stanley E. Boyle, County Income Payments in Washington, 1950-1952. Pullman, Wash. Washington State College, Bulletin No. 26.

#### Level of Living on Garfield County Farms

Garfield County farm families have a standard of living considerably above the national and state averages. Average farm family net income was last estimated at \$2,860. The state average was \$2,380 and the national average \$1,567. Garfield County in 1950 had a farm family level of living index of 170 compared with 154 and 122 for the state and the nation.

On the whole, farm people have not enjoyed a level of living as high as city people. Farm incomes measured in dollars received for labor or goods sold are generally lower on the average than urban incomes. City people also have more conveniences. Because of isolation and the scattered location of farm and ranch homes it is difficult to obtain electrical, telephone, sewer, running water and even highway service. Services are often too costly for public and private utility companies to provide for all rural homes and farmsteads, particularly in remote or inaccessible areas. In numerous cases, incomes are too low for farmers to put in their own electrical, water and other conveniences which families in city neighborhoods take for granted.

In Garfield County the ownership and use of conveniences generally associated with a modern standard of living are above national and state averages. Many new modern farm houses have raised the average greatly since 1945. Good rural electrification development has been accomplished by private and public utilities since 1935. Over 76 percent of all farms are now served with electricity.

In slightly over a century of time, Garfield County farm settlers have developed a wilderness into an advanced and specialized agricultural region of

the United States. Garfield County farms particularly those in the grain and pea growing region from Pomeroy north to the Snake River are well-equipped with modern electrical appliances. Farm housing is of a generally good standard. Farms are well-mechanized with tractors, combines and trucks. In Garfield County, as a whole, farms have modern homes and buildings and living standards well above the general average for all American agriculture.

Table 31.- Indices of Level of Living of Garfield County Farm Families, 1950 Compared with State and National Averages

Index Items	Percentage of total farm families with listed index items		
	United States	Washington	Garfield County
Farm Family Level-of-Living	122	154	170
Median Income per Family	\$1,567	\$2,380	\$2,860
Electricity	78.3%	92.5%	76.3%
Electric Hot Water Heater	17.4	49.1	56.6
Electric Washing Machine	58.7	85.4	71.6
Home Freezers	12.1	14.5	33.8
Mech. Refrigerators	62.7	77.4	100.0
Telephone	38.2	57.5	63.8
Hot and Cold Water Plumbing	23.8	70.4	94.4
Central Heating	18.1	17.8	19.4
Houses with More than One Person per Room	22.3	15.7	6.7
Automobiles	63.0	77.6	59.4
Travel 10 Miles or More to Trading Center	21.4	20.5	49.4

Source: Walter L. Slocum and Carol L. Stone, The Farm People of Washington at Mid-Century. State College of Washington, Washington Agric. Exp. Stations. Bulletin 557, February 1955. Pullman, Washington.

Numerous commercial grain, vegetable, fruit and livestock farms in the Palouse Hills, Blue Mountain valleys and river valleys of Garfield County contribute greatly to the local and state economy. The farming population and its productive work in grains, vegetables and fruits is the major support of the county. The county is among the state's leaders in wheat, barley and green peas.